DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 298 806 HE 021 667

AUTHOR Hazzard, Terry
TITLE Attitudes and Perceptions of White Students Attending Historically Black Colleges and Universities.
PUB DATE Jun 88
NOTE 50p.; Doctoral research paper, Florida State University.
PUB TYPE Tests/Evaluation Instruments (160) -- Reports - Research/Technical (143) -- Dissertations/Theses - Undetermined (040)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Attitude Measures; *Black Colleges; Enrollment Influences; Higher Education; Opinions; Questionnaires; *Racial Composition; Racial Relations; School Desegregation; *Student Attitudes; Student Characteristics; *White Students

ABSTRACT

Many studies have been made over the past several years on black students and their academic performance at predominantly white institutions, but the reversed situation of white students attending historically black educational facilities has received minimal coverage. Based on a literature review and two surveys of white students at a black institution in Alabama and another in Florida, information is presented on: characteristics of white students attending historically black colleges and universities (reasons for attending black institutions, levels of motivation, and prior contact with blacks); educational climate (teacher competence, attitudinal relationships, and extra-curricula activities); black institutions and white enrollment conflicts (Alcorn State University in Mississippi and Tennessee State University/University of Tennessee); and the surveys of white students at Bishop State Junior College (Alabama) and Florida A&M University. Statistical data are provided on: general characteristics; classification and career goals; sources of income; enrollment; factors affecting attendance; prior contact with blacks; academic experience; non-academic experience; impressions; and preferences in academic and social guidance. The findings reveal that: most white students attend black colleges solely to get an education; the average age is 23 and older; over 50% of the white students are enrolled full time; nearly 50% finance their own education; 54% transfer to black institutions from predominantly white institutions; and over 50% find that their academic and non-academic experiences meet their expectations. The survey instrument is included and 39 references are provided. (SM)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED298806

ATTITUDES AND PERCEPTIONS OF WHITE STUDENTS ATTENDING HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

by

Terry Hazzard

June, 1988

Research carried out as part of doctoral work at the Florida State University, Department of Education Leadership. Tallahasee, Florida 32306

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

HE 021 667

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

TERRY HAZZARD

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

ATTITUDES AND PERCEPTIONS OF WHITE STUDENTS

ATTENDING HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITIES

I. Introduction

II. Characteristics of white students attending historically black colleges and universities

- A. Reasons for attending black institutions
- B. Levels of motivation
- C. Prior contact with blacks

III. Educational Climate

- A. Teacher competence
- B. Attitudinal relationships
- C. Extra-curricula activities

IV. Black institutions and white enrollment conflicts

- A. Alcorn State University
- B. Tennessee State University/University of Tennessee

V. Local Survey of white students

- A. Bishop State Junior College
- B. Florida A&M University

VI. Findings and Conclusion

ATTITUDES AND PERCEPTIONS OF WHITE STUDENTS ATTENDING HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITIES

- INTRODUCTION -

For the past several years, a significant number of studies regarding black students and their academic performance at predominantly white institutions have been made. Ever since the 1954 landmark Supreme Court case of Brown v. The Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas, the achievements, attitudes and behaviors of black students have been both compared and analyzed, especially as they relate to white students. Special funding has made the majority of this research possible.

The movement of the 1960's highlighted black student participation at white colleges and universities. Although the movement gradually received momentum, it was an era of tension and transition for colleges and universities in the United States.

Increased integration/desegregation has had a tremendous impact upon institutions of higher learning, but the enrollment of black students, faculty, and administrators at predominantly white institutions has been a slow and painful process. Scott (1978), asserts that most of the legal battles waged by civil rights groups during the first portion of this century have been related to the rights of blacks to pursue an education in white institutions.

Brown (1978) contends that ever since the 1960's colleges and university policy makers have faced new issues and challenges that were not major considerations for them in the past. During

these transitional years, many changes occurred in higher education. One of the more notable and noticeable changes has been the number of white students graduating from historically black colleges and universities. The documentation of this phenomenon has been extremely limited. Although the number of white students attending these institutions has increased, only a few colleges and universities have expressed interest in focusing on this trend.

Unlike the issue of black students attending white colleges and universities, the reversed situation of white students attending historically black educational facilities has received minimal coverage by the media as well as agencies of higher education. For example, Elam (1978) points out that as early as the 1870s, Howard University admitted white students, However, the impact was not great enough to recieve national attention. Other institutions such as Bowie State College in Maryland, Delaware State, and Kentucky State experienced 20-40 percent increases in the overall enrollment of white students, and yet this trend has not been publicly noted or discussed in the literature. As Brown (1973) suggests, "It seems that the time is ripe to organize and produce studies dealing with the white student on the predominantly black campus which are comparable both in number and quality to studies which have investigated the black student on the predominantly white campus." (p. 2). The Southern Regional Education Board (1976) also supports this proposal:

> "Much attention has been focused on the black student enrolled in formerly all-white schools - his adjustment to the new environment, his academic progress, and the attitude of other

> students on campus. Less has been said about the white student who is in a minority group on the black campus, and has been adjusting to a new environment." (p. 29).

A new responsibility will soon face traditionally black colleges and universities as a result of the increasing number of white students attending these institutions. W. C. Brown (1978) asserts that:

> "Black institutions must meet the demands of black students and also must provide programs and services for white students in their enrollment. Black students expect to be prepared to live and serve in the larger society and to compete as equals with graduates from all other colleges and universities. It is only logical to conclude that the white student attending black institutions expect the same quality of education." (p. 1)

This paper will (1) discuss the characteristics of white students attending black colleges and universities; (2) consider the educational climate of these institutions; (3) examine black institutions and the problems associated with white student enrollment; and (4) present findings from two surveys of white students attending two predominantly black institutions, one in Alabama and one in Florida.

Much of the research relative to the profiles of white students attending historically black colleges and universities

suggests that these students have similar characteristics. Following a 1969 study of racial integration in the State of Maryland, Elam (1978) found that white students on black campuses were older than the traditional 18-year-old, they were married with families, had completed military obligations, were often transfer students, were employed, and attended part-time as commuters. As Elam further notes, in 1973 Charles Brown, Associate Professor at Fayetteville State University, conducted a similar study. He determined that "most white students live near the college or university they attend. They usually fall in the 21 and above age group". (p. 57)

Standley's (1977) findings, based on a study in which she collaborated with the Southern Regional Educational Board (SREB), also confirm that white students were older, married, and resided off campus since they had already established independent life styles and were not willing to subject themselves to rules and regulations of institutional living. The SREB described general characteristics of white students in a 1973 publication entitled *The White Student Enrolled in the Traditional Public College and University*.

> "a native of the region, between 27 and 30 years of age and likely to be married, this student has not sought to enroll in a black college. Although deeply concerned about the nature of his experience, academic and social, and also about his physical safety, relatives and friends have made no strong

efforts to influence the decision in either direction. The student has had pleasant and unpleasant experiences related to problems of adjustment and acceptance but has not sought special help. He prefers to work through any diffculties by relying upon his own determination, self-confidence and maturity.

This student arrives at the traditionally black campus with goals firmly fixed and immediately establishes the impression among his peers and upon the faculty that he has enrolled primarily to achieve these goals. Dependent upon limited family resources and his own savings, his decision to enroll at the black institution is based upon sound judgment. Expenses at the college are relatively low, and its location makes daily commuting convenient. He has no plans to become involved in activities that will incur financial obligations. His careful review of the college's academic offerings assures him that the program he wants is available, and the quality of the facilities and the faculty to be involved does not need to be questioned. These factors have helped him to overcome or minimize many of the reservations

> concerning the black college and university he has nurtured for so long." (p. 1)

This data is extremely important, particularly to black colleges and universities, because it helps to understand the attitudes, behaviors, and needs of white students with special interests in higher education. Additionally,

> "It helps the entire student body, faculty, and administration as they continue to move their institutions toward the ultimate objective-quality instruction within the system of American higher education." (Standley, 1978, p.2)

Regardless of a student's race, making a final college choice is a difficult decision for both parent and student. The process raises significant concerns about selecting, an institution which will best fit the individual student's needs. Sidney Hollander Associates (1969) conducted a study about racial integration in the Maryland state colleges. Those findings suggested that some white students chose to attend historically black colleges for philosophical reasons. While some were interested in experiencing a minority status, Elam (1978) reported that for others the objective was racial understanding. Brown (1978) suggested that some white students wanted to appear unprejudiced or wanted to attract attention to themselves. Ida Steven-Burghardt, Dean of Students at Bowie State College discovered in her 1976 study regarding housing and student activities, that white students attended black colleges and universities solely to get an education.

In their study concerning why white students selected black colleges and universities, Brown and Stein, (1972) implemented

pilot study consisting of a 44 item questionnaire. These questionnaires were distributed among five predominantly black colleges and universities in the State of North Carolina. Sixty nine of 145 distributed (53 percent) were returned to the authors. The analysis indicated that 60 percent of all the students responding cited convenience among their primary reason for attending black institutions; 57 percent felt the courses and degrees offered were relevant to their goals; and 45 percent were influenced by the low cost of their institution. The greatest concern among men was of a financial nature (15 percent). Seventeen percent of the females had academic reservations. (p. 9)

Delaware State College, a progressive land grant institution in Dover, Delaware, also conducted a similar survey. To implement the study, a 34 item questionnaire was mailed to a random sample of 462 white students enrolled during the 1980 spring quarter. Of the 462 students, 236 or 51 percent responded. After combining results of the questionnaire with comments written to open-end questions, one specific finding was apparent: financial costs and location were major factors influencing the white students' decision to attend Delaware State College. In her 1978 study, Elam concludes that the motivational factors which influenced white students to attend black colleges are primarily the same as those mentioned in the 1969 study by Sidney Holland Associates and the 1972 study by Brown and Stevin. The authors assert that although proximity, convenience, and program availability are noted among the general reasons for attending these institutions, other motivating factors may include easy entrance requirements

and an opportunity to improve poor grades earned at other institutions.

From other studies, data regarding the extent to which white students have had contact with blacks prior to enrolling at historically black institutions indicate that contact has been extremely limited. This fact was confirmed in a number of studies. For example, in 1972, The Southern Regional Education Board distributed 1,694 questionnaires to white students in 18 traditionally black colleges and universities. Of that number 62 or (37 percent) responded; and 56 percent of those students had experienced practically no contact with blacks prior to their enrollment at the college. None of the students questioned had ever before attended a predominantly black institution. However, most reported that black students had been enrolled in the institution that the white students had attended previously. contact with blacks was also reported to have been restricted to school and employment experiences.

Brown and Stein noted in their 1970 study that:

> "In consonance with the fact that 76 percent of all students attended high schools where the black enrollment was 10 percent or less, (only 11 percent attended schools that had ratios of black students ranging from 16 to 99 percent). Fifty percent described their prior contact with blacks as either non-existent or limited. Forty-five percent described their prior contact with blacks as being extensive; of this number

> the principal areas of contact for males were school 30 percent; military service with employment, athletics, and recreational activities providing 58 percent. For females the principal areas of contact beyond school (48 percent) were employment, military experience (as wives), and hospital work (26 percent); community organizations 12 percent and religious organizations 14 percent." (p. 12.)

The educational climate is an important factor and must be conducive to learning. The limited research related to climate-type variables suggests that people within the same university may function under different conditions and thus, perceive the climate differently. Standley (1978) asserts that:

> "The educational climate of an institution emanates from the cooperative functioning of skills, attitudes, values, and resources which teachers and students bring together." (p. 7)

In her 1977 survey which included 1,189 completed questionnaires from 20 southern historically black colleges and universities, white students indicated that they were able to relate to their black instuctors as readily and as easily as they did to their white instructors. Additionally, their educational preparation met their expectations. Their educational preparation also prepared them for employment opportunities. Through career orientation and counseling services, these students believed

that what they were learning would assist them in their future endeavors.

Standley further points out that other areas of concern when considering climate may include: availability of library resources, campus attitudes, student services, academic standards, and administrative effectiveness. Although these areas were given high ratings, it is significant that a number of students indicated that:

> "Although administrators make public statements that they want highly qualified white students at their institutions, they do little or nothing to recruit non-black students and fail to create a receptive atmosphere for those white students already on the campus." (p.9)

Brown (1973) recognized that when teaching was considered as a facet of the overall climate, most white students favorably viewed the preparedness and genuine concern of the faculty for the student. Standley's 1978 survey also indicated that white students strongly agreed that competent teaching occurred at their institutions, and those students ranked high the overall quality of their educational activities. Additionally, respondents repeatedly used the word "caring" in the open-ended questions. To them, this term displayed a level of sensitivity about what faculty were doing. Other responses applauded the faculty for their degree of enthusiasm.

Elam (1978) reports that the Division of Student Affairs at Bowie State College quote an interesting comment made by white students following a 1971 survey. The findings suggested that:

> "White students feel that the presence of white faculty on campus symbolizes the college's acceptance of white students, and that white students are seeking ethnic changes in the composition of black colleges in order to create an environment which is more comfortable for them." (p.58)

Decker (1955) notes in his survey concerning white teachers in black colleges that competent white faculty are equally as important as black faculty. However, some researchers viewed the role of white teachers differently. For example, Warnat (1976) suggested that white faculty members at black institutions are unable to obtain faculty positions at white institutions, primarily due to a low level of competence in their particular academic discipline. Warnat further suggests that white faculty are present on black college campuses in an effort to expiate their racial guilt. Thus, their role is to play the "martyr." Warnet's third theory is that white faculty want to make a concerted effort to "save the damned." Although white faculty perceive the role of black faculty to be meaningful, Warnat asserts this group of white faculty portray the role of the "messiah"; and this is not well received by black colleges.

Decker submitted questionnaires to 147 white teachers in black colleges. Fifty-four of the questionnaires were returned from 20 colleges in ten states. Survey findings concluded that:

> "Forty percent of the teachers had no particular reason for working in black colleges. As a whole their attitude indicated that "color" as such had no particular meaning to them. Twenty percent were working in Negro colleges because of an interest in race relations, six percent had been appointed to their jobs and another six percent mentioned missionary type motives. About eight percent were convinced that exceptional personal and professional opportunities were present." (p. 97)

From Decker's findings, one teacher indicated that white presence on black campuses not only served as a motivating force for black students, but it also helps to break down stereotypes. All but five percent of white faculty reported having good rapport with black colleagues. Respondents further indicated that "friendships are based on common likes and dislikes and not on the color of the skin." (P. 98)

Brown (1978) asserts in his profile of white students attending black colleges and universities, that white students do not become involved in campus actvities primarily because of lack of time. Elam (1978) suggests that the Steven Report of 1976 revealed that some white students shunn activities out of fear or ridicule, harassment or lack of acceptance. Ida Stevens-Burghardt (1976) suggests that the reluctance may be due to fear but other factors may also be at work. Nevertheless, the author

reports that the fear may promote additional concerns which result in negaitve reactions to positive attempts of black administrators who have made financial aid sources available to them. In her study, she attempted to provide administrators with a basis to alleviate the misconceptions of white students.

Standley (1978) makes several interesting observations regarding the involvement of white students in campus activities and student services. She notes that some students are in their sixties, married and living off campus. As a result, they are less likely to return to campus in order to attend extracurricular activities which are often more appropriate for a younger audience.

Steven-Burghardt (1976) studied extracurricular activities as an opportunity for interaction between black and white students. Her survey was based on 112 respondents from six predominantly black institutions with a white enrollment of 10 percent. Not only were problem areas identified, but suggestions for improvements were also offered. The results are listed below:

> "Ninety-three percent of the respondents reported that their associations with blacks were friendly and satisfying while participating in non-academic student activities." (p. 46)

Fifty-five percent indicated lack of time as the reason for not being involved. She points out that:

> "Therefore, programs of non-academic activities would be planned during the day, in order that students who cannot return to campus for evening

activities may participate and become full members of the college community. If whites were included in planning and in implementing the activities, there is every possibility that they would be attracted to them." (p. 46)

"The data revealed that fifty-two percent of the respondents lacked interest in the non-academic student activities. This fact has implications that the program of non-academic activities should be re-evaluated in terms of its effectiveness in meeting the non-academic needs of all students. Interracial planning boards should be considered for the purpose of including whites and for presenting activities interesting to whites.

Fifty-nine percent of the students participated in non-academic student activities. Twenty-one percent were involved regularly, and thirty-seven percent were seldom received in non-academic activities. Thirty-four percent did not participate at all. This means that more vigorous plans must be organized to engage the students, so that they will be full-fledged of their college communities. In an academic setting, more interactions between the racial group creates better and friendlier relationships in the classroom." (p. 46).

The significance of establishing rapport among black-white faculty members is rewarding to black and white students alike. It is important, as Standley (1978) contends, to understand certain factors which are inherent in establishing such relationships. The foundations for these relationships are deeply rooted in American and Black history. The past is difficult to forget, and some degree of prejudice remains in most of us. Consequently, our behaviors regarding attitudinal relationships most often reflect the affective element of our personality--what Wrightsman (1962) describes as the component that deals "with the feeling the person has toward the minority group, his likings and acceptance of them." (p. 440).

In Elam's (1972) study regarding acceptance of white students on black campuses, a racial attitude scale was discussed and administered to 238 students at Bowie State College in Maryland. The survey group consisted of 149 black students and 89 white students. Significant differences in racial attitudes of blacks and white students were shown. The racial attitudes of whites were most positive than were those of blacks, and older black students (over 24) had a more positive attitude than did younger blacks. Smith (1973) provided additional input to this issue in his experiment completed in the Spring of 1972, at the Carnegie Cross Cultural Experiment Program. Its methodology was to prepare 18 white students at Florida A&M University to understand and learn how to work responsibly with black students and other minorities. The procedures involved collaboration of black and white students in seminars and other activities

to enhance exposure and general mutual participation. The method proved successful because:

> "The process analysis showed that the participant's attitudes toward blacks did change from positive to more positive in the course of the program." (p.630)

When reviewing the overall attitude of white students on black campuses, Elam (1978) reports that white studetns are initially apprehensive and periodically experienced certain forms of racism. Elam also indicates that although white studetns are often times harassed by family and friends, they remain motivated and serious about their education. The Steven Report (1976) indicates that the majority of white students agreed that black colleges and universities fostered "a climate for learning and that the administration, faculty and students desired an intellectual climate." (p. 58). The Maryland Study (1969) summarized the reaction of white students at black campuses who were asked, "On the whole, do you feel you made the right decision in attending a black college?" Eighty percent of the students interviewed replied affirmatively.

Unfortunately, black students' initial reactions toward white students are often not as positive. Whitaker (1986) reported the comments of a 21-year-old senior student government officer at Tennessee State University who responded:

> "We feel that this is clearly an attempt by whites to wipe out the historically black college. You can see it is happening all over. First they bring in white administrators

> then they bring in more white students, then they raise admission standards and tuition. Before you know it, what was a black school is gone." (p. 83)

Whitaker notes further comments made by Dr. Lionel Newson, former president of historically black Central State University, who comments that,

> "There is a definite pattern at work here where attempts are made to discredit the black leadership at our colleges in order to gain control." (p. 83)

Thus, it appears that a sense of unease pervades the campuses of the nation's thirty-five historically black public colleges and universities. When young black students read the literature (which abound on this topic) and observe the comments made by black authority figures, defensive attitudes and opinions are formed; and this negative response is encouraged.

Elam (1978) reports that when reverse integration occurs too fast, it can create negative reactions from blacks. He sites two reasons:

> "First, blacks fear the loss of an institution that represents their cultural heritage; a heritage which is not particularly well projected by white institutions. Rapid and sudden changes in the racial composition of these institutions cause black students to perceive that a black institution is fading away before their

> very eyes and thus, a part of their cultural heritage is being taken away from them. Secondly, black students feel that they are being pushed out and thereby, deprived of an education. This impression, though not based on fact, is as significant in causing an adverse reaction as if in fact, it had been true." (p. 60)

Ernest and Calloway (1957) observed similar behaviors:

> "When whites first enrolled at West Virginia State, some out-of-state Negro students resented their assimilations. They felt that an increase in tuition for out-of-state students was aimed at easing them out of school to make room for whites. A few Negro students complained that professors were bending over backwards to favor whites. They're getting all the breaks on grades." (p. 22)

However, it has been observed that when white students actually enroll at black institutions and matriculate, attitudes eventually change. Elam (1978) suggests that,

> "Blacks are for the most part, friendly to whites. If not overly friendly, they are at least indifferent to the white influx. Little or no hostility has been observed among blacks, even to the disproportionate number of whites on the dean's list or on the list of those who are graduated with honors." (p. 59)

A similar and positive experience was related by a white student at West Virginia State who told the Dean, "the warm reception we received amazed me in view of the way we have treated you." (p. 20) The only white student to attend Coppin State Teachers College in 1962, reported that, "they treated me as any other student and showed no favoritism. It's hard to remember that I'm white and they're Negro until I leave school and go back to East Baltimore." (p. 10)

It is obvious that the total educational climate of an institution may serve to be either detrimental or beneficial to the learning environment. West Virginia State, the first black institution of higher learning in America to win Grade-A accreditation, is an ideal example of how an institution can prosper under reverse integration. However, all black institutions are not as fortunate as West Virginia State when they begin to include white students. Despite the fact that some black institutions are leary of the "white" desire to "intrude," others are open-minded and welcome the opportunity to educate white students. Still there are problems.

Alcorn State University deals with the issue of reverse integration as a problem of locational liability. The second oldest public institution is in Mississippi and the state's oldest public college for blacks, Alcorn is located in rural Claiborne County. Established in 1871, the campus was then convenient to Mississippi's black population and was a satellite to the river which connected Alcorn to A&M. Alcorn became a land grant institution under the orginal Morrill Act. The present name was adopted in 1974.

Prince (1976) describes the history of Alcorn as it fostered, an environment which now obstructs white enrollment:

> "Alcorn's image in Mississippi is heavily conditioned by its history and location. As the First and, for many years, the only public black college; it became the premiere symbol of the black side of Mississippi's dual system of education. The historical image is an immediate serious handicap when attempting to recruit other-race students.
>
> The negative effect of the historical image are compounded by the impact of the College's location. Southwest Mississippi has been in relative decline since the 1970's and in absolute decline since the turn of the century. Located in a very rural and seriously depopulated region, Alcorn is isolated from the mainstream of Mississippi life. Furthermore, the campus lies seven miles from a main highway on a tertiary road. Tucked away in the woods, it remains a mystery to many Mississippians, especially whites, who seldom venture on campus.
>
> White enrollment at Alcorn has been well under half of the non-black total since integration began. Thus far, white students, at Alcorn have come from a variety of sources and no definite pattern has emerged among them. Their

> number to date is so modest that little significance can be attached to their characteristics. In 1976-77, Alcorn's white students included: full and part-time students from nearby areas, mostly commuting; a boarding student from another part of the state; a few public school teachers working on graduate degrees at night; faculty dependents; and an out-of-state transfer student best characterized as an adventurer. In May, 1977, Alcorn awarded its first degree to a white, conferring an M.Ed. in Secondary English on the wife of a professor." (pp. 56-57)

In the final analysis, Alcorn is victimized by its historical image as The Black College for many Mississippians and by its isolated rural location. Because it is situated in an economically depressed portion of the state, the successful recruitment of white students is unlikely in the foreseeable future.

Prince (1976) concludes that "even within what might be called Alcorn's 50 and 100 miles recruiting or convenience zones, Alcorn must compete for white students with seven other neighboring public senior colleges, five of which are traditionally white." (p. 5)

A second issue affecting the attitudes of white students residing at historically black schools is exemplified by the merger of historically white University of Tennessee at Nashville and historically black Tennessee State University. Ordered in

1977 by the United States District Court in Nashville, the merger was initiated on July 1, 1979 under the direction of the Board of regents for State Universities and Community Colleges and joint committees from the two campuses. As summarized in the 1980 Southern Regional Education Board Report, after the first year's implementation: (1) the two campuses still retained their ethnic identities; (2) a decline in white enrollment had occurred on the former University of Tennessee Campus; and (3) a review of the mission of the merged Tennessee State University still presented major problems. Although the merger did result in academic and administrative tensions, no racial conflict was reported. Racial differences, however, still aggravate the merge. Godard (1981) concludes that:

> "The decline in white student enrollment is an acknowledged problem. Some contend that it is a situation that ought to be addressed by white faculty, but some white faculty argue that it is a problem to be solved by black faculty since they need to attract white students to their particular schools or departments.
>
> Within the School of Nursing, some white prospective June graduates were requesting that they not be required to take part in commencement exercises as they prefer not to be seen receiving their degree from what they still regard as a black institution.

> The definition of the mission of the institution is still not settled. It is difficult to make progress on redefining the mission statement because various groups disagree on how it will affect the racial identity of the institution. The Board of Regents is specifying that the university change its role to that of a urban university, a suggestion which was made by the court in its ruling on merger. Many at the school wish to retain its land grant function and fear that the status of an urban university will lessen this historical function." (p. 13)

The literature regarding white students attending historically black colleges and universities is extremely limited. The Education Research Information Center (ERIC) and Dissertation Abstracts were two primary sources for information on this topic. After reviewing the available literature and observing the characteristics, attitudes and behaviors of white students over nearly a decade, approval was granted (by Dr. Charles Brown, Director, Undergraduate Student Studies in Education at Fayetteville State University; Dr. Nancy Standley-Burk, Professor of Counselor Education at Florida A&M University; and the Southern Regional Education Board in Atlanta, Georgia) to poll a more recent group of students, a questionnaire very similar to that used in Brown's survey of 1973 and Standley's survey of 1978 was used.

The study was designed to identify the attitudes and perceptions of white students attending historically black colleges and universities and to analyze the results in terms of implications rather than to accept the responses as fact. The data were divided into several categories: (1) general characteristics; (2) classification, career goals; (3) income for college expenses; (4) enrollment; (5) factors affecting attendance; (6) prior contact with blacks; (7) academic experiences; (8) non-academic experiences; (9) impressions; and (10) preferences in academic and social guidance. Open-ended questions and questions with an "other" category were also included to give the student some leeway in responding.

Two institutions, Bishop State Junior College and Florida A&M University, participated in the survey. A total of 38 questionnaires were distributed to white students at the two institutions, and 38 were completed and returned. Twenty-six questionnaires were completed by white students from Bishop State Junior College in Mobile, Alabama. (Bishop State is a public non-residential two-year college which serves Mobile and Washington Counties. The College offers a core of basic courses leading to three types of degrees: the Associate in Science, the Associate in Arts and the Associate in Applied Science. Vocational certificates in occupational programs are also offered). Twelve completed questionnaires were returned by white students from Florida A&M University in Tallahassee, Florida. (Florida A&M is a four-year public university which offers standard associate, bachelor's, master's and doctoral degrees). Attached is a copy of the survey used.

Questionnaire

THE WHITE STUDENT IN HISTORICALLY BLACK INSTITUTIONS

INSTITUTION AND QUESTIONNAIRE NO. Bishop State - 1

SECTION A: GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS

1. Sex_____ 2. Age _____ 3. Martial Status_____

4. Number of Children _____ 5. State of Birth_____
(Name of State)

SECTION B: CLASSIFICATION, CAREER GOALS, etc.

6. Classification: (Circle one) Freshman, Sophomore, Junior, Senior, Graduate, Special, Unclassified, Exchange, Other (Specify) _____

7. Are you a resident student _____ or non-resident student_____

8. Do you reside in campus housing? Yes _____ No. _____

9. Are you a full-time student _____ or part-time student _____

10. What is your major field? _____

11. What degree is your ultimate goal? (Circle one) Associate, Bachelor's, Master's, Doctorate, Law, Medicine, None, Other _____

12. What is your current grade point average? _____

SECTION C: SOURCES OF INCOME

13. What is the principle source of income for your college expenses?

_____ a. Aid from Parents
_____ b. Scholarships and grants
_____ c. Student Loans
_____ d. Other sources (please explain)

_____
_____
_____

SECTION D: ENROLLMENT

14. Did you enroll in this institution immediately after graduation from high school? Yes ____ No ____

15. If you did not, are you a delayed enrolled high school graduate? Yes ____ No ____

16. If you were delayed in beginning your college education please indicate the reason(s) that caused the delay:

_____ a. uninterested at the time
_____ b. needed to support family
_____ c. discharging military obligation
_____ d. got married
_____ e. maternal (raising children)
_____ f. other (please explain briefly) _____
_____

17. Are you a transfer student? Yes ____ No ____

18. If you are a transfer student, did you transfer to this institution:

_____ a. directly from a predominantly white institution?
_____ b. directly from a predominantly black institution?
_____ c. as a delayed transfer from a predominantly white institution?
_____ d. as a delayed transfer from a predominantly black institution?

19. If you are a delayed transfer student, please indicate the reason(s):

_____ a. uninterested at the time
_____ b. needed to support family
_____ c. discharging military obligation
_____ d. got married
_____ e. maternal (raising children)
_____ f. Other (please explain briefly) _____
_____
_____

20. Having enrolled in this institution, do you now plan to graduate from here?

Yes _____ No _____

SECTION E: FACTORS AFFECTING ATTENDANCE

Please indicate the factors which influenced your decision to enroll in this institution.

21. Why did you decide to attend this institution?

_____ a. Financial costs of institution were suited to my budget.
_____ b. Location of institution was convenient.
_____ c. Courses and degree programs of institution were relevant to my goals.
_____ d. Institution was the only school that accepted me.
_____ e. Other (please explain) _____

_____

_____

_____

22. Did you have any reservations concerning your enrollment in this institution?

Yes _____ No _____

23. If so, were your concerns

_____ a. of an academic nature (e.g., questioned whether this institution could adequately prepare you for your career goal?
_____ b. of a financial nature (e.g., initially thought that the institution was too expensive for your budget)
_____ c. of a social nature (e.g., wondered about your acceptance by black students, feared being ostracized by white peers, community, etc.)
_____ d. other (please explain) _____

_____

_____

_____

24. What is your opinion now relative to the concerns identified in question Number 22?

25. Using the reasons suggested in question 22, briefly explain what, if any, reservations were expressed by:

a. Family _____

_____

_____

_____

b. High School Officials _____

_____

_____

_____

c. Church Officials _____

_____

_____

_____

d. Friends _____

_____

_____

_____

26. Briefly explain what opinion you feel is now held by:

a. Family _____

_____

_____

b. High School Officials _____

_____

_____

_____

c. Church Officials _____

_____

_____

_____

d. Friends _____

_____

_____

_____

27. Since your enrollment in this institution have you recommended it to other prospective white students?

Yes _____ No _____

SECTION F: PRIOR CONTACT WITH BLACKS

28. What is the approximate percentage of black students enrolled in the school, college, or university you attended <u>prior</u> to enrolling in this institution?

_____

29. How would you describe your contact with black people <u>prior</u> to enrolling in this institution?

_____ a. non-existent
_____ b. limited
_____ c. extensive

30. What was your principal area of contact with black people <u>prior</u> to enrolling in this institution?

_____ a. school
_____ b. community organizations
_____ c. religious organizations
_____ d. employment
_____ e. military service
_____ f. Others (please explain _____

_____

_____

_____

SECTION G: ACADEMIC EXPERIENCES

31. In the classroom, are you able to express your opinions freely and comfortably?

_____ a. always
_____ b. sometimes
_____ c. never

32. Do you feel that your black classmates express their opinions freely in your presence?

_____ a. always
_____ b. sometimes
_____ c. never

33. Do you learn more in a white instructor's class than in a black instructor's class?

Yes _____ No _____

34. Would you feel more at ease expressing your opinion if you were black?

Yes _____ No _____ In some instances _____

35. Do you feel most faculty on this campus are well qualified?

Yes _____ No _____

36. Do you feel the overall administration serves as a leader in breaking down racial barriers for white students?

Yes _____ No _____

37. Do you feel the faculty members on this campus demonstrate a high level of competence in their academic specialties?

Yes _____ No _____

SECTION H: NON-ACADEMIC EXPERIENCES

38. To what extent <u>did</u> you expect to participate in non-academic campus activities prior to enrollment in this institution?

_____ a. regularly
_____ b. occasionally
_____ c. not at all

39. To what extent do you now participate in non-academic campus activities?

_____ a. regularly
_____ b. occasionally
_____ c. not at all

40. If you do participate in non-academic campus activities specify which:

_____ Fraternities/Sororities (Greek letter organizations)
_____ Club Organizations (Non-Greek letter organizations)
_____ Athletics (Player, Cheerleaders, Majorette, etc.)
_____ Performing Arts-(Music, Art, Drama)
_____ Journalism-(Newspaper, Yearbook, etc.)
_____ Other (specify) _____

_____

_____

_____

41. If you do not participate, it is because

_____ a. you have no free time
_____ b. it is inconvenient for you to attend
_____ c. you have other interests
_____ d. you have not been asked to participate
_____ e. you do not want to participate
_____ f. other (please explain) _____

_____

_____

_____

42. Are your social contacts on campus primarily with:

_____ a. Other whites with whom you have much in common, e.g., age, sex, marital status, classes together, etc.?
_____ b. Blacks with whom you have much in common, e.g., age, sex, marital status, classes together, etc.?
_____ c. Other whites with which you have little or nothing in common?
_____ d. Blacks with which you have little or nothing in common?
_____ e. None of the above

43. Which of the following have these campus friendships and associations with blacks spilled over into off-campus social activities not related to the shcool:

_____ a. Dating among unmarried students
_____ b. sharing of family occasions
_____ c. Interchange of personal visits with persons of the same sex
_____ d. Interchange of personal visits with persons of the opposite sex
_____ e. None of the above

SECTION I. IMPRESSIONS

44. Since enrolling in this institution, have you encountered any racist attitudes among blacks?

Yes _____ No _____

45. If yes, which of the following have been the most racist in their attitudes? (answer one)

Administrators:	Men _____	Women _____
Faculty:	Men _____	Women _____
Staff:	Men _____	Women _____
Students:	Men _____	Women _____

46. Since enrolling in this institution have your academic experiences

_____ a. exceeded your expectations?
_____ b. met your expectations?
_____ c. barely met your expectations?
_____ d. failed to meet your expectations?

47. Have your non-academic experiences

_____ a. exceeded your expectations?
_____ b. met your expectations?
_____ c. barely met your expectations?
_____ d. failed to meet your expectations?

48. Since enrolling in this institution, have you found:

visible interest in fostering a climate for learning and free inquiry?

Yes _____ No _____

Registration procedures easily executed?

Yes _____ No _____

Student services adequate?

Yes _____ No _____

Student services easily accessible?

Yes _____ No _____

Library facilities adequate?

Yes _____ No _____

That teaching, generally, is geared to meeting the needs of students within the framework of course objectives?

Yes _____ No _____

That the black students are friendly?

Yes _____ No _____

That the black students are interested in maintaining an intellectual climate?

Yes _____ No _____

SECTION J: PREFERENCES IN ACADEMIC AND SOCIAL GUIDANCE

49. If you are having problems of an academic nature, do you seek help from:

_____ a. black professor
_____ b. white professor
_____ c. black counselor
_____ d. white counselor
_____ e. black administrator
_____ f. white administrator
_____ g. black friend
_____ h. white friend
_____ i. Other, e.g., spouse, parent, minister, etc.

_____

_____

50. The best thing that has happened to me on this campus is

_____

_____

_____

_____

51. The greatest obstacle to improving black/white relations on this campus is

_____

_____

_____

_____

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

SECTION A: GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS

All of the 38 questionnaires distributed were completed and returned; and of those, 15 (40 percent) were males and 23 (60 percent) were female students. Surprisingly, 47 percent of the respondents were born in states other than Alabama or Florida. Of the 38 respondents, 18 (47 percent) were single, 24 or (63 percent) were without children. The average age of students responding to the survey instrument is 23 years of age.

SECTION B: CLASSIFICATION, CAREER GOALS, ETC.

Classification of the students included freshmen (31.6 percent; sophomores (26.3 percent); juniors (23.7 percent); seniors (2.6 percent); unclassified (7.9 percent); and other (7.9 percent). Eighty-one percent were registered as full-time students. Twenty-five (67 percent) responded as residents of the State of Florida or Alabama. When white students were asked if they resided in campus housing, 38 (100 percent) indicated, no. Bishop State does not offer on or off-campus housing for students, therefore, the statistical data relative to housing is skewed.

The career goal for 28.9 percent of the white students was to earn the associate degree. Seven (18.4 percent) were interested in the bachelors degree; 15 (39.5 percent) desired

the masters; three (7.9 percent) were in pursuit of the doctorate and one (2.6 percent) was interested in courses strictly for enrichment.

SECTION C: SOURCES OF INCOME

Despite available sources of financial aid assistance, 16 (43.2 percent) indicated they used funds from other sources for their educational expenses.

SECTION D: ENROLLMENT

When white students were asked if they attended college immediately following high school, 94.7 percent responded, no. Twenty-six (40 percent) indicated that they did not immediately attend because of a lack of interest. Twenty (54.1 percent) of the 38 respondents were transfer students, who transferred to this black institution from predominantly white colleges or universities. When asked if white students delayed the transfer from one college to another, 28 (73.7 percent) did not respond. Six (15 percent) delayed the transfer because they were not interested. One (2.6 percent) needed financial assistance; one (2.6 percent) needed to raise families; and two (5.3 percent) indicated other.

More than 50 percent of the respondents indicated that they planned to complete their program of study at the institutions at which they are presently enrolled.

SECTION E: FACTORS AFFECTING ATTENDANCE

Fifty percent of the white students enrolled cited the courses and degree programs offered as the major factors determining their decisions to attend these institutions. Of the remaining respondents, 10 (26.3 percent) cited financial costs and two (15.8 percent) indicated convenience or location of the institution as the major decision-making factors.

Selecting an institution of higher education presents a number of concerns for white students which seriously affect their decision to enroll. Although 25 (65.8 percent) did not respond, nine (23.7 percent) had academic concerns; three (7.9 percent) had concerns of a financial nature; and one (2.6 percent) had a concern of an unspecified nature.

When asked if students would recommend their institutions of enrollment to other students, 33 (86.8 percent) indicated, yes.

SECTION F: PRIOR CONTACT WITH BLACKS

Prior to attending historically black colleges and universities, 51.4 percent of white students reported having had contact with blacks. Previous contacts were however, restricted to school, employment, and in some cases, military service.

SECTION G: ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE

Classroom participation presented no problem for most white students. Of the 38 students responding, 76.3 percent indicated

that they were able to express opinions in the classroom freely and comfortably. Based on questionnaire responses, white students felt that 73.7 percent of their black classmates always expressed their opinions freely. As further reported by respondents, the academic level was high enough to justify their attending black colleges and universities. Twenty-six (81.3 percent) indicated that they did not learn any more in a white instructor's class than they did in a black instructor's class. When asked of white students if they would feel more at ease expressing their opinions if they were black, 97 percent indicated, no.

As to the quality of faculty and administration, 29 (90.6 percent) reported that faculty members at black institutions were well qualified. Ninety percent of 38 respondents indicated faculty members demonstrate a high level of competence in their academic specialities. Twenty-five(69.4 percent) indicated that administration provided leadership in breaking down racial barriers.

SECTION H: NON-ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE

As reported in previous surveys, participation in non-academic activities is extremely limited. When students were asked if they expected to participate in non-academic affairs, 26 (68.4 percent) indicated, "not at all". Seventy-one percent of the 38 respondents indicated that they do not participate in non-academic campus activities primarily due to a lack of time. For white students who chose to participate, 36 percent

indicated that the performing arts were their major attraction. Over 50 percent of the white respondents on black campuses indicated that their social contacts were primarily with other whites with whom they had much in common. According to 65.8 percent of the respondents, the limited contacts did not carry over into other off-campus activities.

SECTION I: IMPRESSIONS

Since enrolling in black colleges and universities, 52.8 percent of white students indicated that they have encountered racist attitudes. Although over 80 percent did not respond in each category, five (71.4 percent) indicated that racist attitudes were prevalent among male administrators and seven (70 percent) among male students. Since enrolling in black institutions, over 50 percent of white students felt both their academic and non-academic experiences met their expectations. Ninety-one percent felt their institutions showed visible interest in fostering an educational climate conducive to learning. With regard to student services, 55.3 percent had no complaints relative to the registration process at their prospective schools. Additionally, 66.7 percent found the Division of Student Services to be adequate and accessible. Accessibility of library services was also rated high. Overall, 94.4 percent of white students attending black colleges and universities indicated that black students were friendly, and over 50 percent noted their desire to maintain an intellectual climate.

SECTION J: PREFERENCES IN ACADEMIC AND SOCIAL GUIDANCE

When assistance is needed to resolve academic, personal, or social problems, 56.3 percent of the white respondents indicated that they sought the help of a qualified individual rather than one based on race or occupational status.

The results of this survey suggest several principle findings which are significant in understanding the attitudes of white students on black campuses. Since Standley's survey of 1978 and Brown's survey of 1973, many factors relative to the perceptions of white students attending historically black colleges and universities remain the same. The recent studies confirm and reinforce the statistics.

1. Over 50 percent of the white students enrolled are full-time.
2. The average age is 23 years and older.
3. One hundred percent of the respondents commute to campus.
4. Nearly 50 percent finance their own education.
5. Fifty-four percent transfer to black institutions from predominantly white institutions.
6. Desired programs, tuition costs, and convenience of location are major factors cited for enrolling at black institutions.
7. Prior contact with blacks appears to be restricted to employment, school, and military service.
8. White students indicate positive reactions regarding their educational experiences.
9. Many white students fail to participate in non-academic activities because they have no free time.

10. Over 50 percent report that their academic and non-academic experiences meet their expectations.

11. Race does not seem to be a significant factor when seeking academic or other assistance.

After reviewing the literature concerning the attitudes and perceptions of white students attending historically black colleges and universities, one is overwhelmed at the speed at which integration in higher education has taken place. Despite numerous problems and concerns associated with black institutions and issues regarding enrollments, enrollment of white students in these institutions continue to increase. Black colleges and universities are serious about the delivery of quality education. This seriousness must be vocalized by those receiving the firsthand experience. A student is an institution's best recruiter. If black colleges and universities are expected to prosper, they will be expected to acknowledge the characteristics of their clientele. The minority student is looking for quality programs and competent professors. White students on black campuses are interested in education, and they require no special treatment. Those fears and apprehensions which are discussed in survey findings are normal reactions to environments that are unknown.

Today, considerable opportunities exist for white students attending historically black colleges and universities throughout the United States. The advantages which those institutions offer to all, but particularly to whites, are manifold. As Crew (1973) states:

> "In many ways black institutions are the select minority of American schools still genuinely committed to the ideal of a liberal education." (p. 437) Offering a range of style and quality, black institutions have an impressive record in

> obtaining national and regional accreditation. All the United Negro College Fund Schools are accredited by "white agencies designed to measure as directed by the ruling white middle class." (p.437)

Black colleges respect teaching and have depended on teaching as their major resource. Crew (1973) reports that black educators are still very much in the (teaching tradition teaching methods) offering opportunities for research and opportunities to revitalize it. whereas, white schools have turned to other facilities and amenities to augment teaching per se. They offer certain advantages exclusively to white students because of their "whiteness" or their "otherness." Crew suggests that a white student can use his or her "otherness" in a black environment as an invitation to be taken seriously because people are likely to listen to the outsider. Furthermore, Crew reports that white students in black institutions face minimal pressure to conform to group behaviors in extra-curricular activities, and they are able to learn a great deal from the spirit of black awareness.

None of these comments are intended to indicate that black institutions are free of problems, but the observations are significant because they arouse curiosity and bring attention to an important element of long term and true integration. It is also interesting and significant to note that Crew is white. That fact illustrates that attention is being given by legitimate researchers, both black and white, to the phenomenon of white students who are minorities at historically black institutions

just as attention has been given to the black student who has been a minority at traditionally white educational institutions. When similar roles are experienced and understood by all, true equality will result.

REFERENCES

Brown, C. (1988). Director, Undergraduate Student Studies: Fayetteville State University, Fayetteville, North Carolina. Personal Communication.

Brown, C. & Stein, P. (1972). The White Student in Five Predominantly Black Universities. Negro Educational Review, XVIII, 148-169.

Brown, C. (1973). The White Student on the Black Campus. Atlanta, Georgia. Southern Regional Education Board.

Crew, L. (1973). Opportunities for Whites in Black Colleges Colorado Quarterly, 21, 437-447.

Decker, P. (1955). A Study of White Teachers in Negro Colleges. Journal of Negro Education, XXIV, 421-525.

Elam, A. (1978). Two Sides of the Coin: White Students in Black Institutions. Journal of the National Association of Women Deans, Administrators, and Counselors. XVI, 57.

Elam, A. (1988). Graduate Faculty: Bowie State College, Bowie, Maryland. Personal Communication.

Ernest, H., & Calloway, A. (1957). Reverse Integration. New York Times Magazine, 6, 20-25.

Godard, J. (1981). The Merger of Tennessee State University at Nashville. Atlanta: Southern Regional Education Board.

Hollander, Sidney Associates. (1969). A Study of Racial Integration in Maryland State Colleges. Baltimore, Maryland.

Hollander, Sidney Associates. (1988). Research Firm. Baltimore, Maryland. Personal Communication.

Only One White Student Attends Desegregated Teachers College. (1962). Southern Schools News. 10.

Prince, V. (1976). Integration at Alcorn State University. Atlanta: Southern Regional Education Board.

Scott, P. (1978). Two Sides of the Coin: Black Students in White Institutions. Journal of National Association for Women Deans, Administrators, and Counselors, XLI, 62.

Smith, B. (1973). A Cross-Cultural Program for Attitude Modification of White Students on Black University campuses. Phi Delta Kappan, LIV, 629-630.

Standley-Burk, N. (1978). White Students Enrolled in Black Colleges and Universities: Their Attitudes and Perceptions. Atlanta, Georgia. Southern Regional Education Board.

Standley-Burk, N. (1988). Professor, Counselor Education: Florida A&M University, Tallahassee, Florida. Personal Communication.

Steven-Burghardt, I. (1976). Beliefs of Caucasian Students Enrolled in Selected Negro Higher Education Institutions Concerning Housing and Student Activities. Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation. Southern Illinois University.

Warnat, W. (1976). The Role of White Faculty on the Black College Campus. Journal of Negro Education, 45, 233-237.

Whitaker, C. (1980). Is There a Conspiracy to the Black College Ebony, XLI, 83-88.

White Students Saves Negro School: West Virginia State Prospers Under Integration. (1955). Ebony, 17.

Wrightsman, L. (1962). Dimensionalization of Attitudes toward the Negro. Psychological Reports, XL, 439.

OTHER REFERENCES CONSULTED

Aber, E. (1959). A Reverse Pattern of Integration. Journal of Educational Sociology, 32, 283.

Blackledge, C. (1988). Director, Research and Development. Bishop State Junior College, Mobile, Alabama.

Campbell, A. (1971). White Attitudes Toward Black People.

Flemming, J. (1988). Author/Writer. Personal Communication.

Hill, S. (1988). Center with Educational Statistics: Washington, D. C., Personal Communications.

Holsendolph, E. (1971). Black Colleges are Worth Saving. Fortune, 106.

Johnson, C. (1971). The Importance of Black Colleges. Educational Records, LII, 165-171.

Jones, A. (1973). Uncle Tom's Campus. New York: Columbia University Press.

Justensen, B. (1975). Minority Students Not Out of Place. The Fayetteville Obsever-Times.

Nettles, M. (1988). Educational Testing Services. Princeton, N.J. Personal Communication.

Parker, W. (1976). Recruiting the Minority Student for Black Campuses. Atlanta: Southern Regional Education Board.

Pfeifer, C. (1974). University Climate Perceptions by Black and White Students. Journal of Applied Psychology, 59, 660-662.

Rice, M. (1988). Associate Professor; Public Administration Institute: Louisiana State University. Personal Communication.

Spence, D. (1988). Board of Regents. Atlanta, Georgia. Personal Communication.

Southern Regional Education Board, (1988). Atlanta, Georgia Personal Communication.

Willie, C. (1988). Professor; Urban Studies: Harvard University. Personal Communication.

Willie, C. (1977). Black/Brown/White Relations. New Brunswick, N. J.: Transaction Books.